



Siemens Power Generation Turns to Aelita for Active Directory Management

The Challenge

With 22,000 users in its global Active Directory domain, Siemens Power Generation needed a powerful Active Directory management and user provisioning solution.

Siegfried Jagott works with Siemens Business Services, the internal IT consulting group that serves Siemens Power Generation. "Implementing a global domain in Active Directory creates certain administrative and user-management challenges," Jagott said. The team at Siemens also has agreed that current "native" administrative tools do not provide a sufficient degree of visibility when changes are made to Active Directory objects.

Jagott estimates it was taking administrators up to 25 minutes to create a user with the Microsoft Management Console (MMC).

"The other challenge is permissioning," added Mike Welborn, a consultant with Siemens Power Generation. Welborn was leader of the team that evaluated Active Directory migration and management solutions for Siemens. "Besides needing an interface that is usable, we require a tool that can perform permissioning in a very granular manner. We wanted to 'tear off' components within the network and our business operating system and provide granular management to people based on what we call 'virtual OUs'."

Siemens Power Generation, one of 17 operating companies within Siemens, was at the forefront of Active Directory implementation within the business. Siemens Business Services needed an open solution that could be extended across the entire Siemens enterprise as needed.

Planning for Migration and Management

Siemens Power Generation began planning for Active Directory management at the same time the organization was planning its Active Directory migration.

"We evaluated migration and management solutions together, as if they were part of the same suite, and we were very impressed with Aelita (now a part of Quest Software) on both fronts," Welborn said. "This combined offering enabled us to go with a single source for Active Directory migration and management by providing a best-of-breed solution in both categories. The migration solution and Enterprise Directory Manager were the right choices for us."

The Active Directory management solution (now known as Quest ActiveRoles Server) was selected for its functionality and openness. "The solution had the specific functions we were looking for already built into the user interface and did not require additional scripting in order to start using the tool right out of the box," Welborn said. "In addition, it had the flexibility we needed to accommodate specific requirements given the various operational differences that exist globally."

The Solution

"Security improvements can be difficult to quantify," said Jagott, "but there is no question we have a much more secure environment as a result of Enterprise Directory Manager."

Additional benefits of the system include:

- **Permission Management:** Enterprise Directory Manager has significantly simplified managing permissions across Siemens Power Generation's multiple IT operations, while providing an open administrative framework that can be extended across the Siemens organization when centralized user management is implemented.

Overview

"Aelita enabled us to go with a single source for migration and management by providing best of breed solutions in both categories"

- Mike Welborn,
Consultant
Siemens

ROI

- Reduced time necessary to create new users from 25 minutes to less than one minute
- Successfully implemented global permission management system that supports virtual "OUs"
- Provided open framework that accommodated operational difference and supported expansion across other business groups
- Integrated Active Directory with internally developed Web interface

Benefits

- Improved troubleshooting processes through change tracking
- Improved security by limiting administrative access to Active Directory
- Significantly simplified permissions management
- Consistently enforced internal policies
- Gained a single source for Active Directory migration and management

Environment

- Approximately 100 domains
- 22,000 users across eight divisions within Siemens Power Generation

- **Policy Enforcement:** Enterprise Directory Manager automatically applies naming conventions. Possible conflicts are identified before changes are applied to Active Directory.
- **Change Tracking:** Siemens Power Generation can now track changes to Active Directory and easily determine who made changes to what attributes of a directory object. This is very helpful in troubleshooting.
- **Security:** Fewer people have direct administrative access to Active Directory, enhancing security. Security is also enhanced through change auditing and improved permission management.

A Partnership that Works

“Aelita’s record of support was definitely something we considered when choosing their solutions,” Welborn said. “Aelita has a very good track record of providing support, both with their tools and their software development kit.”

The Enterprise Directory Manager software development kit includes code samples and documentation to speed the creation of custom business rules and applications that extend the functionality of Enterprise Directory Manager and enable easy integration of Active Directory with other corporate applications, such as HR and ERP applications.

“Another benefit of working with Aelita was direct contact with their developers,” said Jagott. “As an early adopter, we were able to make specific requests regarding new features, and several of these features and enhancements were incorporated into the product, including the EDM/ADSI provider.” This interface enables custom scripts and applications to communicate with Active Directory through Enterprise Directory Manager, taking advantage of Enterprise Directory Manager’s security, workflow integration and reporting capabilities. “It’s a real pleasure to work with an organization that is so responsive to customer requirements.”

About Siemens

Siemens Power Generation is a global fossil power generation business, which has an installed fleet of more than 600 gigawatts worldwide. Siemens Power Generation offers a full spectrum of innovative, environmentally friendly, cost-effective products, and an unparalleled level of service and support, including gas and steam turbine-generator technology; worldclass process control and power management systems; operations and maintenance support; power plant modernization and upgrades; and fuel cells for the distributed generation market.

With more than 25,000 employees worldwide, Siemens Power Generation is committed to improving operating plant competitiveness and profitability by delivering technology-based solutions to our customers.”

About Quest Software, Inc.

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